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and assume its rightful place as part of the inmost life of him who is so fortunate as to find it.

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THE NEW REALISM AND THE OLD[1]

THE problems of philosophy fall naturally into four groups: (1) Problems of knowing; (2) problems of being; (3) problems of acting; (4) problems of feeling. The subjects with which these problems deal comprise, respectively, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, and esthetics. Epistemology is itself concerned with two fairly distinct types of problems: (1) the functional problem of the criteria of truth and the way of attaining it; (2) the structural problem of the nature of knowledge and the relation of the knower to the known. Discussion of the functional problem of epistemology has given us such doctrines and attitudes as mysticism, rationalism, empiricism, and pragmatism, which are so many theories as to how we should get our knowledge and how we should test its truth. Discussion of the second or structural problem of epistemology has given us the doctrines of naïve realism, of dualistic realism, and of subjectivism, which are so many theories as to the nature of the relation of a knower to the objects known. These three epistemological theories, or rather types of theory (for there are, as we shall see, several variations of each), may be discussed pretty much on their own merits and in relative independence not only of metaphysical, ethical, and esthetical issues, but even of the epistemological problems of the methodological or functional kind. In this paper I shall undertake to define the theories of naïve realism, dualism, and subjectivism, as they appear to me, and to show how the difficulties inherent in the first theory have led to the adoption of the second, and how that has been given up for the third, the futility of which, in its turn, has led to a revival of the first.

The theory of naïve realism is the most primitive of the theories under discussion. It conceives of objects as directly presented to consciousness and being precisely what they appear to be. Nothing intervenes between the knower and the world external to him. Objects are not represented in consciousness by ideas; they are themselves directly presented. This theory makes no distinction between seeming and being; things *are* just what they *seem*. Consciousness is thought of as analogous to a light which shines out through the

[1] Read at the tenth annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association, December, 1910.

sense organs, illuminating the world outside the knower. There is in this naïve view a complete disregard of the personal equation and of the elaborate mechanism underlying sense perception. In a world in which there was no such thing as error, this theory of the knowledge relation would remain unchallenged; but with the discovery of error and illusion comes perplexity. Dreams are probably the earliest phenomena of error to arouse the primitive mind from its dogmatic realism. How can a man lie asleep in his bed and at the same time travel to distant places and converse with those who are dead? How can the events of the dream be reconciled with the events of waking experience? The first method of dealing with this type of error is to divide the real world into two realms, equally objective and equally external, but the one visible, tangible, and regular, the other more or less invisible, mysterious, and capricious. The soul after death, and sometimes during sleep, can enter the second of these realms. The objectified dreamland of the child and the ghostland of the savage are the outcome of the first effort of natural realism to cope with the problem of error. It is easy to see, however, that this doubling up of the world of existing objects will only explain a very limited number of dream experiences, while to the errors of waking experience it is obviously inapplicable. Whenever, for example, the dream is concerned with the same events as those already experienced in waking life, there can be no question of appealing to a shadow world. Unreal events that are in conflict with the experience of one's fellows, and even with one's own more inclusive experience, must be banished completely from the external world. Where, then, shall they be located? What is more reasonable than to locate them inside the person who experiences them? for it is only upon him that the unreal object produces any effect. The objects of our dreams and our fancies, and of illusions generally, are held to exist only "in the mind." They are like feelings and desires in being directly experienced only by a single mind. Thus the soul, already held to be the mysterious principle of life, and endowed with peculiar properties, transcending ordinary physical things, is further enriched by being made the habitat of the multitudinous hosts of non-existent objects. Still further reflection on the phenomena of error leads to the discovery of the element of relativity in all knowledge, and finally to the realization that no external happening can be perceived until after it has ceased to exist. The events we perceive as present are always past, for in order that anything may be perceived it must send energy of some kind to our sense organs, and by the time the energy reaches us the phase of existence which gave rise to it has passed away. To this universal and necessary temporal aberration of per-

ceived objects is added an almost equally universal spatial aberration. For all objects that move relatively to the observer are perceived not where they are when perceived, but, at best, where they were when the stimulus issued from them. Not only may some of the stars which we see shining each night have ceased to shine years before we were born, but even the sun which we see at a certain place in the sky is there no longer. The present sun, the only sun that now exists, we never see. It fills the space that to us appears empty. Its distance from what we see as the sun is measured by the distance through which the earth has turned on its axis in the eight minutes which it has taken the sun's light to reach our eye. And in addition to these spatial and temporal aberrations of perception we know that what we perceive will depend not only upon the nature of the object but on the nature of the medium through which its energies have passed on their way to our organism; and also upon the condition of our sense organs and brain. Finally, we have every reason to believe that whenever the brain is stimulated in the same way in which it is normally stimulated by an object, we shall experience that object even though it is in no sense existentially present. These many undeniable facts prove that error is no trivial and exceptional phenomenon, but the normal, necessary, and universal taint from which every perceptual experience must suffer.

It is such considerations as these that have led to the abandonment of naïve realism in favor of the second theory of the nature of knowledge. According to this second theory, which is exemplified in the philosophies of Descartes and Locke, the mind never perceives anything external to itself. It can perceive only its own ideas or states. But as it seems impossible to account for the order in which these ideas occur by appealing to the mind in which they occur, it is held to be permissible and even necessary to infer a world of external objects resembling to a greater or less extent the effects, or ideas, which they produce in us. What we perceive is now held to be only a picture of what really exists. Consciousness is no longer thought of as analogous to a light which directly illumines the extra-organic world, but rather as a painter's canvas or a photographic plate on which objects in themselves imperceptible are represented. The great advantage of the second or picture theory is that it fully accounts for error and illusion; the disadvantage of it is that it appears to account for nothing else. The only external world is one that we can never experience, the only world that we can have any experience of is the internal world of ideas. When we attempt to justify the situation by appealing to inference as the guarantee of this unexperienceable externality, we are met by the difficulty that the world we infer can only be made of the matter of experience, *i. e.*,

can only be made up of mental pictures in new combinations. An inferred object is always a perceptible object, one that could be in some sense experienced, and, as we have seen, the only things that according to this view can be experienced are our mental states. Moreover, the world in which all our interests are centered is the world of experienced objects. Even if, *per impossibile,* we could justify the belief in a world beyond that which we could experience, it would be but a barren achievement, for such a world would contain none of the things that we see and feel. Such a so-called real world would be more alien to us and more thoroughly queer than were the ghostland or dreamland which, as we remember, the primitive realist sought to use as a home for certain of the unrealities of life.

It seems very natural at such a juncture to try the experiment of leaving out this world of extra-mental objects, and contenting ourselves with a world in which there exist only minds and their states. This is the third theory, the theory of subjectivism. According to it, there can be no object without a subject, no existence without a consciousness of it. To be, is to be perceived. The world of objects capable of existing independently of a knower (the belief in which united the natural realist and the dualistic realist) is now rejected. This third theory agrees with the first theory in being epistemologically monistic, *i. e.,* in holding to the presentative rather than to the representative theory of perception, for, according to the first theory, whatever is perceived must exist, and according to the present theory whatever exists must be perceived. Naïve realism subsumed the perceived as a species under the genus existent. Subjectivism subsumes the existent as a species under the genus perceived. But while the third theory has these affiliations with the first theory, it agrees with the second theory in regarding all perceived objects as mental states —ideas inhering in the mind that knows them and as inseparable from that mind as any accident is from the substance that owns it.

Subjectivism has many forms, or rather, many degrees. It occurs in its first and most conservative form in the philosophy of Berkeley. Descartes and Locke, and other upholders of the dualistic epistemology, had already gone beyond the requirements of the picture theory in respect to the secondary qualities of objects. Not content with the doctrine that these qualities as they existed in objects could only be inferred, they had denied them even the inferential status which they accorded to primary qualities. The secondary qualities that we perceive are not even copies of what exists externally. They are the cloudy effects produced in the mind by combinations of primary qualities, and they resemble unreal objects in that they are *merely* subjective. The chief ground for this element of subjectivism in the

systems of dualistic realism immediately preceding Berkeley, was the belief that relativity to the percipient implied subjectivity. As the secondary qualities showed this relativity, they were condemned as subjective. Now it was the easiest thing in the world for Berkeley to show that an equal or even greater relativity pertained to the primary qualities. The perceived form, size, and solidity of an object depend quite as much upon the relation of the percipient to the object as do its color and temperature. If it be axiomatic that whatever is relative to the perceiver exists only as an idea, why, then, the primary qualities which were all that remained of the physical world could be reduced to mere ideas. But just here Berkeley brought his reasoning to an abrupt stop. He refused to recognize that (1) the *relations between* ideas or the order in which they are given to us, and (2) the *other minds* that are known, are quite as relative to the knower as are the primary and secondary qualities of the physical world. I can know other minds only in so far as I have experience of them, and to infer their independent existence involves just as much and just as little of the process of objectifying and hypostatizing my own ideas as to infer the independent existence of physical objects. Berkeley avoided this obvious result of his own logic by using the word "notion" to describe the knowledge of those things that did not depend for their existence on the fact that they were known. If you had an *idea* of a thing—say of your neighbor's body —then that thing existed only as a mental state. But if you had a *notion* of a thing—say of your neighbor's mind—then that thing was quite capable of existing independently of your knowing it. Considering the vigorous eloquence with which Berkeley inveighed against the tendency of philosophers to substitute words for thoughts, it is pathetic that he should himself have furnished such a striking example of that very fallacy. In later times Clifford and Pearson did not hesitate to avail themselves of a quite similar linguistic device for escaping the solipsistic conclusion of a consistent subjectivism. The distinction between the physical *objects* which as "constructs" exist only in the consciousness of the knower and *other minds* which as "ejects" can be known without being in any way dependent on the knower, is essentially the same both in its meaning and in its futility as the Berkeleian distinction of idea and notion. For the issue between realism and subjectivism does not arise from a psycho-centric predicament—a difficulty of conceiving of objects apart from any consciousness—but rather from the much more radical "ego-centric predicament"—the difficulty of conceiving known things to exist independently of my knowing them. And the poignancy of the predicament is quite independent of the nature of the

object itself, whether that be a physical thing like my neighbor's body, or a psychical thing like my neighbor's mind.

Some part of this difficulty Hume saw and endeavored to meet in his proof that the spiritual substances of Berkeley were themselves mere ideas; but Hume's position is itself subject to two criticisms: First, it does not escape the ego-centric predicament—for it is as difficult to explain how one "bundle of perceptions" can have any knowledge of the other equally real "bundle of perceptions" as to explain how one "spirit" can have knowledge of other "spirits." Second, the Humean doctrine suffers from an additional difficulty peculiar to itself, in that by destroying the conception of the mind as a "substance," it made meaningless the quite correlative conception of perceived objects as mental "states." If there is no substance there can not be any states or accidents, and there ceases to be any sense in regarding the things that are known as dependent upon or inseparable from a knower.[2]

Passing on to that form of subjectivism developed by Kant, we may note three points: (1) A step back toward dualism, in that he dallies with, even if he does not actually embrace, the dualistic notion of a *ding-an-sich,* a reality outside and beyond the realm of experienced objects which serves as their cause or ground. (2) A step in advance of the subjectivism of Berkeley and Hume, in that Kant reduces to the subjective status not merely the *facts* of nature but also her *laws,* so far, at least, as they are based upon the forms of space and time and upon the categories. (3) There appears in the Kantian system a wholly new feature which is destined to figure prominently in later systems. I mean the dualistic conception of the knower, as himself a twofold being, transcendental and empirical. It is the transcendental or noumenal self that gives laws to nature, and that owns the experienced objects as its states. The empirical or phenomenal self, on the other hand, is simply one object among others, and enjoys no special primacy in its relation to the world of which it is a part.[3]

The post-Kantian philosophies deal with the three points just mentioned in the following ways: (1) The retrograde feature of Kant's doctrine—the belief in the *ding-an-sich*—is abandoned. (2) The step in advance—the legislative power conferred by Kant upon the self as knower—is accepted and enlarged to the point of viewing consciousness as the source not only of the *a priori* forms of relation, but of all relations whatsoever. (3) The doctrine of the dual self is

[2] For elaboration and proof of this, see the article by the author entitled "A Neglected Point in Hume's Philosophy," *Philosophical Review,* January, 1905.

[3] *Cf.* what Kant called his refutation of (Berkeleian) idealism.

extended to the point of identifying in one absolute self the plurality of transcendental selves held to by Kant, with the result that our various empirical selves and the objects of their experience are all regarded as the manifestations or fragments of a single perfect, all-inclusive, and eternal self. But it is not hard to see that this new dualism of the finite and the absolute self involves the same difficulties as those which we found in the Cartesian dualism of conscious state and physical object. For either the experience of the fragment embraces the experiences of the absolute or it does not. If the former, then the absolute becomes knowable, to be sure, but only at the cost of losing its absoluteness and being reduced to a mere "state" of the alleged fragment. The existence of the absolute will then depend upon the fact that it is known by its own fragments, and each fragmentary self will have to assume that its own experience constitutes the entire universe—which is solipsism. If the other horn of the dilemma be chosen and the independent reality of the absolute is insisted upon, then it is at the cost of making the absolute unknowable, of reducing it to the status of the unexperienceable external world of the dualistic realist. The dilemma itself is the inevitable consequence of making knowledge an internal relation and hence constitutive of its objects. Indeed a large part of the philosophical discussion of recent years has been concerned with the endeavor of the absolutists to defend their doctrine from the attacks of empiricists of the Berkeleian and Humean tradition in such a way as to avoid equally the Scylla of epistemological dualism and the Charybdis of solipsism. But, as we have seen, the more empirical subjectivists of the older and strictly British school are open to the same criticism as that which they urge upon the absolutists, for it is as difficult for the Berkeleian to justify his belief in the existence of other spirits, or the phenomenalistic follower of Hume his belief in bundles or streams of experience other than his own, as for the absolutist to justify those features of the absolute experience which lie beyond the experience of the finite fragments.

And now enter upon this troubled scene the new realists, offering to absolutists and phenomenalists impartially their new theory of the relation of knower to known. On this point all subjectivists look alike to them, and they make no apology for lumping together for purposes of epistemological discussion such ontologically diverse theories as those of Fichte and Berkeley, of Mr. Bradley and Professor Karl Pearson. Indeed, it can not be too emphatically stated that the theory in question is concerned primarily with this single problem of the relation of knower to known. As such, it has no direct bearing on other philosophical issues, such as those of monism and pluralism, eternalism and temporalism, materialism and spiritu-

alism, or even pragmatism and intellectualism. Of course this does not mean that those individuals who defend the new realism are without convictions on these matters, but only that as a basis for their clearer discussion it is first of all essential to get rid of subjectivism.

Like most new things this new theory is in essentials very old. To understand its meaning it is necessary to go back beyond Kant, beyond Berkeley, beyond even Locke and Descartes—far back to that primordial common sense which believes in a world that exists independently of the knowing of it, but believes also that that same independent world can be directly presented in consciousness and not merely represented or copied by "ideas." In short, the new realism is almost identical with that naïve or natural realism which was the first of our three typic theories of the knowledge relation; and as such, it should be sharply distinguished from the dualistic or inferential realism of the Cartesians.

Now the cause of the abandonment of naïve realism in favor of the dualistic or picture theory was the apparently hopeless disagreement of the world as presented in immediate experience with the true or corrected system of objects in whose reality we believe. It follows that the first and greatest problem for the new realists is to amend the realism of common sense in such wise as to make it compatible with the universal phenomenon of error and with the mechanism of perception upon which that phenomenon is based and in terms of which it must be interpreted.

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DISCUSSION

OPPOSITION AS CONDITION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

IN No. 16 of this volume Professor Walter B. Pitkin was kind enough to give a critical abstract of five essays published by me in the last years, all expounding one system of thought, based on the principle that opposition is the spring of consciousness. I feel very thankful to Professor Pitkin for the pains he took in drawing a very vivid and generally true picture of the line of thought I pursued, and I am glad that he finds me at least on the trail to truth, although my path diverges by a large angle from the psychological highroad.

Indeed Professor Pitkin raises only one objection to the system contained in my writings, although, to be sure, that objection is